

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name(s):** National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** Sea Grant - Industry Fellowship Program (Industry Fellowship Program)
- **Announcement Type:** Initial Announcement
- **Funding Opportunity Number:** SGIndustryFell 2004
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):** 11.417, Sea Grant Support
- **Dates:** Applications must be received by 5 p.m.(local time) on December 1, 2003 by a state Sea Grant Program [or by the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) in the case of an institution of higher education in a non-Sea Grant state]. Applications are to be forwarded to the NSGO by the state Sea Grant Programs by 5 p.m. on December 8, 2003.
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** The Sea Grant - Industry Fellowship Program (Industry Fellowship Program), which is available to graduate students enrolled in either MS or PhD degree programs in institutions of higher education in the United States and its territories, with required matching funds from private industrial sponsors, expects to support five new Industry Fellows in FY 2004. Industry Fellows will work on research and development projects on topics of interest to a particular industry/company. In a true partnership, the student, the faculty advisor, the Sea Grant College or institute, and the industry representative will work together, sharing research facilities and the cost of the activity.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Description

Today's global economy is putting unprecedented demands on the US industrial community for innovation and new technology. This situation presents challenges to industry and academic institutions to develop new paradigms leading to more efficient

utilization of available human, fiscal, and technical resources. This can be accomplished through the recruitment of graduates trained in technologies relevant to an industry's future and the creation of opportunities for collaboration between industrial and academic scientists and engineers. Academically well-trained students with exposure to advanced industrial issues constitute a critical component of success in that endeavor. To respond to the need for strengthened ties between academia and industry, Sea Grant developed the Sea Grant - Industry Fellowship Program (Industry Fellowship Program) in 1995.

For the FY 2004 competition now being announced, funds are available to award five new Industry Fellowships. Each fellow will be a graduate student selected through national competition, and will be known as a (Company Name)/Sea Grant Industry Fellow.

The goals of the Industry Fellowship Program are to 1) enhance the education and training provided to top graduate students in academic institutions in the United States and its territories; 2) provide real-world experience of industrial issues to graduate students and to accelerate their career development; 3) increase interactions between the nation's top scientists and engineers and their industrial counterparts; 4) accelerate the exchange of information and technologies between academic institutions and industry; 5) provide a mechanism for industry to influence Sea Grant research priorities and solve problems of importance to industry; and 6) forge long-term relationships between Sea Grant Colleges and industrial firms.

The Industry Fellowship Program, in cooperation with specific companies, provides up to two years of support for highly-qualified graduate students who are pursuing research and development projects on topics of interest to a particular industry/company. Continued support after the first year will be contingent upon the availability of Federal funds and satisfactory performance by the fellow. In a true partnership, the student, the faculty advisor, the Sea Grant College or institute, and the industry representative work together on a project from beginning to end. Research facilities and the cost of the activity are shared. Academic institution faculty are the major source for identifying potential industrial collaborators and suitable research topics. However, other sources can be used to identify potential industrial partners including the Sea Grant Marine Advisory Services, university industrial relations offices, and the National Sea Grant Review Panel. Sea Grant directors are encouraged to use a variety of sources in building successful partnerships with industry.

B. Program Authority

Authority for the Industry Fellowship Program is provided by the following: 33 U.S.C. 1127(a).

II. Award Information

The award for each Industry Fellowship, contingent upon the availability of Federal funds, will be in the form of a multi-year grant of up to \$30,000 per year from the NSGO for up to two years; matching funds equal to at least 50 percent of the

Federal funding must also be provided by the industrial partner to support the budget for the proposed project. Sea Grant anticipates awarding a total of \$300,000(including matching funds)through this announcement by supporting five new Industry Fellows in FY 2004-2005. Anticipated start date for the Fellowships is June 1, 2004.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Prospective Fellows must be enrolled or provisionally accepted in an MS or PhD degree program at an institution of higher education in the United States or its territories. Applications must be submitted by the institution of higher education.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Matching funds equal to at least 50 percent of the Federal funding must also be provided by the industrial partner to support the budget for the proposed project.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Content and Form of Application Submission

Applications must adhere to the provisions under "Applications" and the eight requirements under "Required Elements" by the deadline of December 1, 2003. Failure to follow these restrictions may result in applications being rejected without review.

1. Applications

The original and nine (9) copies of the application must be submitted. The number of pages in the application must be in accordance with the page limitations specified for certain of the requirements under "Required Elements" (i.e., project abstract, curriculum vitae, project description, and description of collaborating industrial firm). All printed pages in the application must be on 8.5" x 11" paper with at least a 10-point font.

2. Required Elements

Applications must include the following eight elements:

a. Signed Title Page: The title page must identify the prospective Fellow, be signed by the Faculty Advisor and the institutional representative, and provide complete contact information. The program area being addressed should be clearly identified by starting the project title Sea Grant - Industry Fellowship". The total amount of Federal and matching funds being requested for each project year must be listed.

b. **Project Summary:** The project summary should concisely describe the activity being proposed and the impact that would result from its successful completion, in a form suitable for publication. Applicants are encouraged to use the Sea Grant Project Summary Form 90-2, but may use their own form as long as it provides the same information as the Sea Grant form. The project summary should include: 1. Title: Use the exact title as it appears in the rest of the application. 2. Investigators: List the names and affiliations of each investigator who will significantly contribute to the project, starting with the Principal Investigator. For Sea Grant Fellowships, the faculty advisor or the state Sea Grant Director may be used. 3. Funding request for each year of the Fellowship, including matching funds if appropriate. 4. Project Period: Start and completion dates. Applications should request a start date of June 1, 2004, 5. Project Abstract: This should include the rationale for the proposed activity, the scientific or technical objectives and/or hypotheses to be tested, and a brief summary of the work to be completed. The Project Abstract (summary of the proposed thesis or the general intended area of study) should not exceed three pages.

c. **Budget and Budget Justification:** There should be a separate budget for each year as well as a cumulative annual budget for the entire period of the proposed fellowship. The Sea Grant Budget Form 90-4 should preferably be used, but the institution may use its own form as long as it provides the same information as the Sea Grant form. Sub-contractors, if any, should have a separate budget page. Indirect costs are not allowable for either the fellowship or for any costs associated with the fellowship (15 CFR 917.11(e), "Guidelines for Sea Grant Fellowships").

Matching funds equivalent to 50 percent of the NSGO funds must be provided by the industrial partner. Allocation of matching funds must be specified in the budget. The budget should include adequate travel funds for the Fellow, the industrial mentor, and the faculty advisor to meet at least twice per year during the fellowship period, preferably at the site of the industrial partner. The budget may also include up to one month of salary or stipend support for the faculty advisor or one other project participant, in addition to the Fellow, who is affiliated with the institution of higher education.

d. Curriculum vitae of the student, the faculty advisor, and the company-appointed research mentor (2-page maximum per investigator).

e. Official copies of all undergraduate and graduate student transcripts.

f. Two signed letters of recommendation, including one from the student's faculty adviser.

g. Education and career goal (2-page maximum) from the student indicating the number of years for which fellowship support is being sought and the student's interest in technology development and transfer.

h. **Project Description (10-page limit):** Brevity will assist reviewers and program staff in dealing effectively with applications. Therefore, the Project Description may not exceed 10 pages. Tables and visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and other pictorial presentations, are included in the 10-page limitation; literature citations are not included in the 10-page limitation. Conformance to the 10-page limitation will be strictly enforced. All information needed for review of the application should be included in the main text; no appendices are permitted.

Introduction/Background/Justification: What is the problem being addressed and what is its scientific and economic importance to the advancement of technology, to the cooperating industrial partner, and to the region or nation?

Research or Technical Plan: What are the goals, objectives, and anticipated approach of the proposed project? While a detailed work plan is not expected, the application should present evidence that there has been thoughtful consideration of the approach to the problem under study. What capabilities does the industrial partner possess that will benefit the Fellow?

Output/Anticipated Economic Benefits: Upon successful completion of the project, what are the anticipated benefits to the student, the industrial partner, the institution of higher education and its faculty, the sponsoring Sea Grant Program, and the nation?

References and Literature Citations: Should be included, but will not be counted in the 10-page project description limit.

- i. Signed letter of commitment from the industrial partner.
- j. A brief (1-page) description of the collaborating industrial firm.

B. Submission Dates and Times

December 1, 2003, 5 pm (local time) - Applications due at state Sea Grant Program or at NSGO (only if application is from an institution of higher education in a non-Sea Grant state).

December 8, 2003, 5 pm EST - Applications due at NSGO from state Sea Grant Programs.

Applications will be stamped with the date received at the state Sea Grant Program or the NSGO. Applications arriving after the above deadlines will be accepted for review only if the applicant can document that the application was provided to a delivery service that guaranteed delivery prior to the specified closing date and time. In any event, applications received by the NSGO or the state Sea Grant Programs later than two business days following the closing date will not be accepted.

C. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages may be obtained from Sea Grant College Program Directors. The addresses of the Sea Grant College Program directors may be found on Sea Grant's World Wide Web home page (<http://www.nsgo.seagrant.org/SGDirectors.html>) or may also be obtained by contacting Mr. Joseph Brown at the NSGO (mail address: National Sea Grant College Program, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone: 301-713-2438 x135; or e-mail: joe.brown@noaa.gov). Applications packages may also be obtained directly from the NSGO by contacting Mr. Brown.

D. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

E. Funding Restrictions

Indirect costs are not allowable for either the fellowship or for any costs associated with the fellowship (15 CFR 917.11(e), "Guidelines for Sea Grant Fellowships").

F. Other Submission Requirements

Applications from institutions of higher education in Sea Grant states must be submitted to the state Sea Grant Programs. The addresses of the state Sea Grant College Programs may be found at the following Internet website: (<http://www.nsgo.seagrant.org/SGDirectors.html>) or may also be obtained by contacting Mr. Joseph Brown at the NSGO (mail address: National Sea Grant College Program, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone: 301-713-2438 x135; or e-mail: joe.brown@noaa.gov). Applications from elsewhere may be submitted either to the nearest state Sea Grant Program or directly to the NSGO. Applications submitted to the NSGO should be addressed to: National Sea Grant Office, R/SG, Attn: Mrs. Geraldine Taylor, Applications Processing, Room 11732, NOAA, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (telephone number for express mail applications is 301-713-2445). All applications must be hard copy only. Facsimile transmissions and electronic mail submission of applications will not be accepted.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria and weighting of the criteria are as follows:

1. Academic record and statement of career goals and objectives of student (10 percent).
2. Quality of project and applicability to program priorities (70 percent total) – Benefit accruing to the student from his or her participation as a Sea Grant - Industry Fellow, including exposure to industrial methods and mentoring by the industrial partner (25 percent); level of commitment of the industrial partner to the project, as demonstrated by financial support, mentoring on technical and other issues such as industry trends, problems, and opportunities, offering exposure to an industrial setting, facilities/equipment, etc. (25 percent); Importance of the problem and the benefits expected to the industrial partner and the nation due to the advancement of technology (20 percent).
3. Recommendations and/or endorsements of student (5%).
4. Additional relevant experience related to diversity of education; extracurricular activities; honors and awards; interpersonal, written, and oral communications skills – special skills, past experiences, or training that render him/her especially qualified for the proposed project; participation by the Fellow in proposal preparation will be viewed favorably (15 percent).
5. Financial need of student (0 percent).

B. Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. Applications will be ranked in accordance with the above criteria and their assigned weights by independent review panels consisting of government and academic experts. Panel members will provide individual evaluations of each applicant, and their ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the applications. The selecting official shall award in the rank unless the application is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one of the selection factors provided below. The selecting official shall make final recommendations for award to the Grants officer who is authorized to obligate the funds and execute the award.

C. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on the following factors:

1. Balance/Distribution of funds: across academic disciplines, by types of institutions, and geographically;
2. Availability of funds;
3. Program-specific objectives (see Section I.A. Program Description); and
4. Degree in scientific area and type of degree sought.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of applications will occur during February 2004, and funds are expected to be awarded by approximately June 1, 2004, the start date that should be used on the Application for Federal Assistance (Form 424) for successful applications.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The notice of award is signed by the NOAA Grants Officer and is the authorizing document. It is provided by postal mail to the appropriate business office of the recipient organization.

The NSGO will notify each unsuccessful applicant by informing the state Sea Grant Program through which the application was submitted in writing, via e-mail, and by providing a written summary, via e-mail, of the comments given by the review panel. The state Sea Grant Programs will, in turn, formally notify each unsuccessful applicant and forward the summary comments provided by the NSGO. The applications that are not ultimately selected for funding will be destroyed.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements published in the Federal Register on October 1, 2001 (66 FR 49917), as amended by the Federal Register notice published on October 30, 2002 (67 FR 66109). You may obtain a copy of these by notices by contacting the agency contact(s) under Section VII, or by going to the website at: www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces140.html.

C. Reporting

All financial and progress reports shall be submitted in triplicate (one original and two copies). Financial reports are to be submitted to the NOAA Grants Officer and performance reports (summary of accomplishments and activities) are to be submitted to the NOAA Industry Fellowship Program Manager. Financial reports are semi-annual and performance reports are annual.

VII. Agency Contact(s)

Contact Dr. Leon M. Cammen, National Sea Grant College Program, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; tel: (301) 713-2435 ext. 136; e-mail: leon.cammen@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

Sea Grant program information collection and reporting requirements in this notice are authorized by the Office of Management and Budget (Control No. 0648-0362).